

**Appendix D**

**Form A - Questionnaire for**

**Active Duty Personnel**

# U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Benefits Administration



## SURVEY OF SERVICEMEMBERS SATISFACTION with the VA EDUCATION BENEFITS CLAIMS PROCESS

Thank you for your help with this important project. This booklet contains questions about your recent experience with filing for VA education benefits. Please base your answers only on your experience with the educational claim identified in the space below.

Please read and answer the following question first.

**According to their records, VA received an education claim from you, you are currently receiving education benefits, or have received them in the past. Is this true?**

- ☐ **Yes** (Continue to instructions on the next page of the booklet, complete the rest of the questionnaire as soon as possible, and mail it in the enclosed postage paid envelope.)
- ☐ **No** (STOP. You do not have to complete the rest of this questionnaire, but please return the questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope.)

Again, we thank you for helping VA provide better service to veterans and their dependents.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA



[SERIAL]

## INSTRUCTIONS

This survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. Please follow these instructions.

- ① Use a soft lead pencil.
- ② Fill in only one answer circle for each question unless it tells you to "*Mark all that apply.*"
- ③ When you are finished, please place the questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope and put it in the mail.

All questions ask you to fill in the circles. For example:

52. Did VA let you know your application had been received?

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

In addition, at the end of the form there is space for you to give us any addition comments concerning how VA could improve the way educational benefits are handled.

Please watch for "SKIP" instructions -- they tell you when to skip over a group of questions that you do not need to answer.

### OMB Control Number : 2900-0569 Public Reporting Burden Statement

VA may not conduct or sponsor, and respondent is not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. All responses are voluntary. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspects of this collection of information, call 1-800-827-1000 for mailing information on where to send your comments.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR EDUCATION BENEFITS

1. Are you currently on active-duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2. When did you first LEARN about VA's education benefits program?

- ☐ Before recruitment
- ☐ At the time I was recruited
- ☐ Soon after I joined

3. Where did you learn about VA's education benefits program?

- ☐ Commercial or advertisement
- ☐ Recruiter
- ☐ Information pamphlet
- ☐ Another person in my unit
- ☐ Friend or family
- ☐ Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_

4. Looking back, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from this source?

- ☐ All
- ☐ Most
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Little
- ☐ None

5. How accurate was the information you received?

- ☐ Very accurate
- ☐ Somewhat accurate
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat inaccurate
- ☐ Very inaccurate

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6. Did you receive a pamphlet regarding your education benefits through the mail?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 8)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 7)



7. How much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from the pamphlet?

- ☐ All
- ☐ Most
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Little
- ☐ None

## CONTACT WITH A VA SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

8. Did you ever contact your school or university veterans affairs representative(s) regarding your education benefits?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 13, page 2)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 9)



9. Why did you contact the school veterans affairs representative(s)?

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Get information before I filed
- ☐ Apply for education benefits
- ☐ Check on the status of my education application
- ☐ Change the status of enrollment
- ☐ Get enrollment certified
- ☐ Get other information

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10. Overall, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from the contacts with the school veterans affairs representative(s)?

- ☐ All
- ☐ Most
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Little
- ☐ None




11. How responsive was the school veterans affairs representative(s) to your request?

- ☐ Very responsive
- ☐ Somewhat responsive
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat non-responsive
- ☐ Very non-responsive

12. How courteous were they?

- ☐ Very courteous
- ☐ Somewhat courteous
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat discourteous
- ☐ Very discourteous

The next three sections of the questionnaire deal with different ways you can contact a VA Regional Processing Office by phone:

-  Calling 1-800-827-1000 (toll free);
-  Calling 1-888-GI BILL-1 (toll free) or;
-  Calling a Long Distance Area Code and phone number at your own expense.

Please answer for each of these ways you have used.

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## CONTACTING VA AT 1-800-827-1000

13. Did you ever call VA at 1-800-827-1000 regarding your education benefits?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 24, page 4)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 14)

14. Why did you call VA at 1-800-827-1000?

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Get information before I filed
- ☐ Apply for education benefits
- ☐ Check on the status of my education claim
- ☐ Change the status of enrollment
- ☐ Check on my remaining education benefits
- ☐ Check on payment
- ☐ Correct a payment problem
- ☐ Ask about the Work Study Program
- ☐ Get other information

15. How easy was it to get through to VA at 1-800-827-1000?

- ☐ Very easy
- ☐ Somewhat easy
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat difficult
- ☐ Very difficult
- ☐ Never got through (SKIP to Q 24, page 4)

16. Which of the following typically happen to you when you call VA at 1-800-827-1000?

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Frequently busy
- ☐ Wait over a minute for call to be answered
- ☐ Disconnected before my call is answered
- ☐ Call gets misdirected
- ☐ Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ None of the above

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17. When you called 1-800-827-1000 were you connected directly to a VA Education Regional Processing Office (VA RPO) in Atlanta, GA; Buffalo, NY; Muskogee, OK; or St. Louis, MO?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 24, page 4)  
☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 18)

18. Which VA RPO did you talk to?

- ☐ Atlanta, GA  
☐ Buffalo, NY  
☐ Muskogee, OK  
☐ St. Louis, MO

19. In general, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from your telephone contact with VA at 1-800-827-1000?

- ☐ All  
☐ Most  
☐ Some  
☐ Little  
☐ None

20. Were you generally able to get this information on the first call?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

21. How responsive was the person you talked to on the phone?

- ☐ Very responsive  
☐ Somewhat responsive  
☐ Neither  
☐ Somewhat non-responsive  
☐ Very non-responsive

22. How courteous was the person you talked to on the phone?

- ☐ Very courteous  
☐ Somewhat courteous  
☐ Neither  
☐ Somewhat discourteous  
☐ Very discourteous

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23. Were VA employees able to give you information about your particular education claim on the phone?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Didn't need claim information

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## CONTACTING VA AT 1-888-GI BILL-1

**24. Did you ever call VA at 1-888 GI BILL-1 regarding your education benefits?**

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 35, page 5)  
☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 25)



**25. Why did you call VA at 1-888 GI BILL-1?**

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Get information before I filed  
☐ Apply for education benefits  
☐ Check on the status of my education claim  
☐ Change the status of enrollment  
☐ Check on my remaining education benefits  
☐ Check on payment  
☐ Correct a payment problem  
☐ Ask about the Work Study Program  
☐ Get other information

**26. How easy was it to get through to VA at 1-888 GI BILL-1?**

- ☐ Very easy  
☐ Somewhat easy  
☐ Neither  
☐ Somewhat difficult  
☐ Very difficult  
☐ Never got through (SKIP to Q 35, page 5)

**27. Which of the following typically happen to you when you call VA at 1-888 GI BILL-1?**

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Frequently busy  
☐ Wait over a minute for call to be answered  
☐ Disconnected before my call is answered  
☐ Call gets misdirected  
☐ Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ None of the above

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**28. In general, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from your telephone contact at 1-888 GI BILL-1?**

- ☐ All  
☐ Most  
☐ Some  
☐ Little  
☐ None

**29. Were you generally able to get this information on the first call?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**30. Was your question answered by the automated system or did you speak with a VA employee at a VA Education Regional Processing Office (VA RPO)?**

- ☐ Automated system (SKIP to Q 35, page 5)  
☐ VA employee (CONTINUE with Q 31)  
☐ Both (CONTINUE with Q 31)



**31. Which VA RPO did you talk to?**

- ☐ Atlanta, GA  
☐ Buffalo, NY  
☐ Muskogee, OK  
☐ St. Louis, MO

**32. How responsive was the person you talked to at the VA RPO?**

- ☐ Very responsive  
☐ Somewhat responsive  
☐ Neither  
☐ Somewhat non-responsive  
☐ Very non-responsive

**33. How courteous was the person you talked to at the VA RPO?**

- ☐ Very courteous  
☐ Somewhat courteous  
☐ Neither  
☐ Somewhat discourteous  
☐ Very discourteous

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**34. Were VA employees able to give you information about your particular education claim on the phone?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Didn't need claim information

**CONTACT WITH A VA EDUCATION REGIONAL PROCESSING OFFICE**

**35. Did you ever call the VA Education Regional Processing Office (VA RPO) in Atlanta, GA; Buffalo, NY; Muskogee, OK; or St. Louis, MO directly without using a toll-free number?**

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 45, page 6)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 36)



**36. Which VA RPO did you call?**

- ☐ Atlanta, GA
- ☐ Buffalo, NY
- ☐ Muskogee, OK
- ☐ St. Louis, MO

**37. Why did you call the VA RPO?**

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Get information before I filed
- ☐ Apply for education benefits
- ☐ Check on the status of my education claim
- ☐ Change the status of enrollment
- ☐ Check on my remaining education benefits
- ☐ Check on payment
- ☐ Correct a payment problem
- ☐ Ask about the Work Study Program
- ☐ Get other information

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**38. How easy was it to get through to the VA RPO?**

- ☐ Very easy
- ☐ Somewhat easy
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat difficult
- ☐ Very difficult
- ☐ Never got through (SKIP to Q 45, page 6)

**39. Which of the following typically happen to you when you call the VA RPO?**

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Frequently busy
- ☐ Wait over a minute for call to be answered
- ☐ Disconnected before my call is answered
- ☐ Call gets misdirected
- ☐ Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ None of the above

**40. In general, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from your telephone contact with the VA RPO?**

- ☐ All
- ☐ Most
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Little
- ☐ None

**41. Were you generally able to get this information on the first call to the VA RPO?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**42. How responsive was the person you talked to at the VA RPO?**

- ☐ Very responsive
- ☐ Somewhat responsive
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat non-responsive
- ☐ Very non-responsive

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43. How courteous was the person you talked to at the VA RPO?

- ☐ Very courteous
- ☐ Somewhat courteous
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Somewhat discourteous
- ☐ Very discourteous

44. Were employees at the VA RPO able to give you information about your particular education claim on the phone?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Didn't need claim information

45. Did you ever contact any of the following for information?

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ VA regional office, either in person or through correspondence
- ☐ VA's Web Site on the Internet
- ☐ State or county Veterans Service Organizations
- ☐ VA representative on base
- ☐ Friends, family, co-workers
- ☐ Never contacted any of the above

## APPLYING FOR BENEFITS

46. Do you recall filling out the application for your education benefits?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 49)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 47)



47. Did you find anything to be difficult or confusing about the application form?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 49)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 48)

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48. What specifically did you find to be difficult or confusing about the application form?

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Print was hard to read
- ☐ It was too long
- ☐ Some questions were not clear
- ☐ Some instructions were confusing
- ☐ Asked for information VA should have already had
- ☐ Asked for information that was hard to supply
- ☐ Not clear why all the information was needed

49. To whom did you submit your application for education benefits?

- ☐ School
- ☐ VA directly
- ☐ Don't know

50. At the time you applied, how completely did you understand the steps necessary to process your claim?

- ☐ Completely
- ☐ Mostly
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Only a little
- ☐ Not at all

51. At the time you applied, how completely did you understand how benefits would be paid to you?

- ☐ Completely
- ☐ Mostly
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Only a little
- ☐ Not at all

52. Did VA let you know your application had been received?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

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**53. How completely did VA keep you informed of the status of your application?**

- ☐ Completely
- ☐ Mostly
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Only a little
- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Didn't need status information

**54. How long did it take to process your application?**

- ☐ 1 week
- ☐ 2 weeks
- ☐ 3 weeks
- ☐ 4 weeks
- ☐ 5 weeks
- ☐ 6 weeks
- ☐ 7 weeks
- ☐ 8 weeks
- ☐ 9 weeks
- ☐ 10 weeks or more

**55. How long do YOU think is reasonable for VA to process your application?**

- ☐ 1 week
- ☐ 2 weeks
- ☐ 3 weeks
- ☐ 4 weeks
- ☐ 5 weeks
- ☐ 6 weeks
- ☐ 7 weeks
- ☐ 8 weeks
- ☐ 9 weeks
- ☐ 10 weeks or more

**56. From the time your application was submitted to VA, how long did it take to get your first check?**

- ☐ 1 week
- ☐ 2 weeks
- ☐ 3 weeks
- ☐ 4 weeks
- ☐ 5 weeks
- ☐ 6 weeks
- ☐ 7 weeks
- ☐ 8 weeks
- ☐ 9 weeks
- ☐ 10 weeks
- ☐ 11 weeks
- ☐ 12 weeks
- ☐ 13 weeks or more

**57. How long do YOU think is reasonable for you to receive your first check from the time your application was submitted to VA?**

- ☐ 1 week
- ☐ 2 weeks
- ☐ 3 weeks
- ☐ 4 weeks
- ☐ 5 weeks
- ☐ 6 weeks
- ☐ 7 weeks
- ☐ 8 weeks
- ☐ 9 weeks
- ☐ 10 weeks
- ☐ 11 weeks
- ☐ 12 weeks
- ☐ 13 weeks or more

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## CERTIFICATION AND PAYMENTS

**58. Do you find anything to be difficult about the monthly CERTIFICATION process?**

- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 59)
- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 60)
- ☐ Don't know (SKIP to Q 60)

**59. What specifically do you find to be difficult about the monthly certification process?**

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Certification forms are not received
- ☐ Certification forms do not arrive at the same time each month
- ☐ Have had to contact VA to get forms sent
- ☐ Have had to pay postage
- ☐ Forms are confusing
- ☐ Forms represent burdensome paperwork
- ☐ Information on form is inaccurate

**60. Do you find anything to be difficult about the monthly PAYMENT process?**

- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 61)
- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 62, page 8)
- ☐ Don't know (SKIP to Q 62, page 8)

**61. What specifically do you find to be difficult about the monthly payment process?**

**Mark all that apply**

- ☐ Payments do not arrive when needed
- ☐ Payments do not arrive at the same time each month
- ☐ Have had to contact VA to get payment
- ☐ No explanation of the amount
- ☐ No access to direct deposit
- ☐ Problem with direct deposit

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62. Have you ever received an inaccurate payment?

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 64)  
☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 63)



63. Was the inaccuracy resolved in a timely manner?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

64. Have you ever had to borrow or pay out-of-pocket expenses in order to enroll or stay enrolled in school because VA did not complete your paperwork on time?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

65. Have you ever had to delay enrollment because VA did not complete your paperwork on time?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

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## OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

66. Do you believe you have a good understanding of the education benefits you have used and which remain?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

67. Do you plan to use your full entitlement for this education program?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

68. All things considered, how satisfied are you with the way VA has handled your education benefits claim?

- ☐ Very satisfied  
☐ Somewhat satisfied  
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied  
☐ Very dissatisfied

69. Overall, how would you rate your knowledge of VA benefits for which you might be entitled?

- ☐ Excellent  
☐ Very good  
☐ Good  
☐ Fair  
☐ Poor

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

**70. What is your gender?**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**71. What is your current age?**

- ☐ 19 years old or younger
- ☐ 20 to 24 years old
- ☐ 25 to 29 years old
- ☐ 30 to 34 years old
- ☐ 35 to 39 years old
- ☐ 40 years old or older

**72. What is your current marital status?**

- ☐ Never been married
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed

**73. Aside from the classes you are currently taking, what is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- ☐ Less than high school graduate
- ☐ High school graduate or GED
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ College graduate
- ☐ Graduate work

**74. In what type of education program are you currently enrolled?**

- ☐ High school or GED
- ☐ On-the-job training or apprenticeship program
- ☐ Certificate/license program
- ☐ Two-year academic college program
- ☐ Four-year academic college program
- ☐ Post-graduate degree program

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**75. Do you have any dependent children 5 years old or younger?**

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 77)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 76)

**76. How many dependent children 5 years old or younger do you have?**

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 or more

**77. Do you have any dependent children between the ages of 6 and 17?**

- ☐ No (SKIP to Q 79)
- ☐ Yes (CONTINUE with Q 78)

**78. How many dependent children between the ages of 6 and 17 do you have?**

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4 or more

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